## Západočeská univerzita v Plzni Fakulta filozofická

## Bakalářská práce

# HENRY VIII, HIS LIFE, HIS POLITICAL AND PERSONAL TURMOIL, HIS BREAK WITH THE CHURCH OF ROME

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#### 1 INTRODUCTION

The Bachelor's thesis deals with the life of Henry VIII, one of the most famous British monarchs. Its objective is to show both the positive and negative sides of his mind and personality, his personal and political strength, his marital turmoil and his passions. The topic was selected because of my interest in the life of Henry VIII. The topic contributes to British realia.

The thesis is divided into five main chapters with several sub-chapters. The first chapter describes Henry's personality, how it was developed during his childhood. The second chapter provides the information on his wives and turmoils of his married life. Political affairs during his reign are enlightened in the third chapter. This chapter includes the information on parliament, on Cardinal Wolsey, Henry's famous minister, Lord Chancellor, and finally on the importance of the King's Navy concerning the expeditions and foreign trade. The fifth chapter describes the Church and the English reformation during the reign of Henry VIII and the last chapter deals with Henry's passions for music and poetry, science, food, and sports and its impacts on Henry's health.

Most of the sources were English and Czech historical books. Some books were mainly about his marriages, e.g. Alison Weir's book *The Six Wives of Henry VIII*, others provided an overview of his reign in general, e.g. James Alexander's book *The Tudor Age.* Other sources were taken from the Internet. Some of them does not merely provide fundamental information but also emphasis on Henry's injuries and the food served at Henry's feast. Other online sources were British documentaries, mostly those of David Starkey as a narrator, e.g. *Henry VIII: The Mind of a Tyrant.* 

#### **2 HENRY'S PERSONALITY**

Henry VIII, a king better known for his reign, obesity, six marriages and many executions while two of them were of his wives Anne Boleyn and Catherine Howard is portrayed as a man with personal and political strength who was very intelligent. Under his rule England experienced its revolutionary period. [1]

As a child he was ahead of his time. His character while growing up and mentality surpassed his age. In 1499 Erasmus of Rotterdam was presented to Henry VIII and his sisters. He wrote about Henry: "In the midst stood Prince Henry, now nine years old, and having already something of royalty in his demeanour in which there was certain dignity combined with singular courtesy." [2]

Henry's constantly developing personality, though unspoilt and moderate at the beginning of his life and the first years of his reign, deteriorated with his aging. In David Starkey's documentary, *The Mind of a Tyrant*, Henry is described as "a slim, athletic, beautiful, elegant, musical, poetical, reasonable, charming, sweet-tempered young man who'd married for love. How does he turn into the Henry who is the horror, Henry who is the tyrant?" [3]

Though high tempered he was not impulsive so all his steps concerning any political or religious changes, wars or marriages were premeditated. [4]

#### 2.1 Influences

As Henry was surrounded by many people—his relatives, servants, tutors, chancellors, etc.—he was influenced by some of them in his life.

Being Plantagenet as well as Tudor, he had his mother's personal beauty and his father's physical and mental strength. <sup>[5]</sup> Henry's personality was also characterized by egoism which accompanied a life of any prince and later influenced Henry's decisions.

In his early years he was influenced mainly by his closest relatives, especially by his mother, grandmother and later when he moved to the court by his father.

#### 2.1.1 Influence of Elizabeth of York

Henry's mother Elizabeth of York played a big role in her son's childhood. According to David Starkey's research, the evidence was found in Henry's handwriting which was very similar to his mother's (typical "r" which looked like "z") and differed from his known tutors'. [6]

It is known that Henry grew up far away from his brother Arthur and was brought up together with his three sisters, Margaret, Mary and Elizabeth, so their father did not give them as much importance as he gave to his first-born son Arthur. [7]

## 2.1.2 Influence of Margaret Beaufort

Along with his mother, his grandmother Margaret Beaufort played a great role in Henry's life, especially in his early childhood. He was influenced by her intelligence, piousness and her emotional way of seeing the world. According to Dr. David Starkey, she also influenced Henry in a matter of his first marriage with Catherine of Aragon. [8]

## 2.1.3 Influence of Henry VII

After death of his mother, Elizabeth of York, and his brother Arthur, Henry left his childhood home Eltham Palace and came to the court. He started spending most of the time with his father Henry VII who wanted to make him the King of England. They stayed in Richmond palace. As Henry VII cared about wealth too much, the palace was equipped with various luxurious items. There were tapestries in bedrooms, gold draperies and Italian furniture and it was a place where royal treasury was stored. As Carolly Erickson writes, it might be the reason why Richmond was called "Rich Mount." [9]

His father kept a tight rein on Henry. The room of young Henry was next to his father's. He was isolated, he was allowed to go outside only through a secret door but most of the time he was kept inside not to get in touch with people who could have endangered his life as the heir of the throne. Those were mostly people who could have suffered from some diseases, especially sweating sickness, a mysterious disease which resulted in death in couple of hours. It appeared every spring and summer and became epidemics in 1508. This epidemics made Henry VII and his son hide in different palaces in order to escape from certain death. That is why young Henry had only selective servants free from diseases. Everyone who entered his room was checked by Henry VII himself or by guards before and after the visit. [10]

Henry rarely spoke in public or in gatherings because he was scared of his father's famous blazes of anger. It was superintended that everything what was said in his presence had to be good, wise and pious.

Henry VII tried to protect his son from everything bad and was very careful in bringing up his son. Their relationship got worse when Prince Henry turned into his adulthood and in his last years of life, Henry VII stopped being a person whom his son could look up to. In April 21, 1509 Henry's father died of tuberculosis at Richmond Palace and was entombed in Westminster Abbey next to his wife Elizabeth. [11]

A major part of Henry's father's character reflected in his behaviour. It was particularly the policy of negotiating with foreign countries in different matters and political gambits. Nevertheless, he did not follow his father's interests in politics. Although he discussed some affairs with his chief ministers and councillors, he did not show keen interest in politics and left various arrangements and executions of political affairs solely on his ministers who he relied on for such tasks.

#### 3 MARRIAGES

Although Henry annuled two of his marriages and beheaded two of his six wives, he necessarily did not have to be a tyrant which he is considered to be by many people nowadays. Not only in David Starkey's documentaries was he described as a good and attentive husband who was able to treat his wives in a tender and respectful way. They were given many presents from jewels to huge settlements of land. However, his tenderness and respect to them lasted only while there was a hope that they could give birth to a son. Once this hope disappeared, Henry's love also faded. Henry simply cut them off and his wives were not aware of that until they heard some rumours or until they were sent for to get arrested. [12]

At times marriages were more diplomatic issues than anything else. They were supposed to unite two different countries in order to

assure peace between them. In the case of Henry's first marriage, one of the reasons was that England and Spain had one main aim in common and the aim was to invade France. [13] The reasons for his second marriage to Anne Boleyn were not diplomatic at all. She took use of Henry's increasing unhappiness and desperation in marriage to Catherine of Aragon and by using efficient tactics she seduced him. [14] His third marriage to Jane Seymour showed up to be the luckiest one in the case of a long expected successor. [15] The reason for marrying his fourth wife Anne of Cleves was purely diplomatic and as for his last two marriages, Henry's love played the main role. [16]

## 3.1 Catherine of Aragon

Henry firstly got married to Catherine of Aragon. She was five years older than him and a widow after his brother's death. According to the Carolly Erickson's book, 10 year-old Henry was Catherine's companion when the marriage between her and Henry's brother Arthur was being prepared. Catherine couldn't speak English so they had to speak Latin. Henry had the best language tutors. He could speak Latin, French, Italian and Greek without any difficulties. [17]

After Arthur's death in April 1502, Catherine's parents, King Ferdinand II of Aragon and Queen Isabella I of Castile, wanted their daughter to become Queen of England, but they needed a Papal dispensation. After it was certain that Catherine did not carry Arthur's child, they could get married in two years when Henry turned 14. While waiting for the marriage, she got to know that her mother had died and that Henry under domination of his father was not allowed to marry her because Ferdinand II had not paid her dowry. Thus Catherine had to live in poverty and without any friends as she stopped being given any food

and any money. However, everything changed when Henry VII died. Young Henry was created Prince of Wales and they got married on 11 June 1509 in Greenwich. [18] In the documentary The Wives of Henry VIII, David Starkey talks about several possible reasons why Henry chose Catherine as his wife and Carolly Erickson mentions only one in her book. They both agreed on the theory that it was Henry's father's last wish. Starkey added another reason that seems more real to him and according to him Henry wanted to marry her because of hatred for France that Spain and England had in common. [19]

Henry and Catherine seemed to be happy at the beginning of their marriage. They respected each other. Catherine was docile and submissive and also very pious. Her piousness along with her ageing appearance when she was in her forties became less attractive for Henry with time. She gave birth to many children but only daughter Mary survived infancy. [20] In the sixteenth century it was inconceivable that Mary as a girl or woman would have become a successor. At the time of Henry VIII one of the consequences of a female successor could have resulted in a civil war. [21] Once Henry thought of making his illegitimate son Henry FitzRoy who he had with his mistress Mary Blunt a successor in 1525. He appointed him duke of Richmond and Lord High Admiral. [22]

In spite of having several ideas and pondering about his failing marriage, his final decision was to divorce Catherine so that he could marry Anne Boleyn with his vision that she could give him a male successor. It obviously caused him many problems because a divorce was not allowed by the Church. Any marriage could just have been disputed as it happened in cases of Louis XII, King of France, in 1499, or Charles Brandon, the duke of Suffolk, Henry's lifelong friend. Although Henry VIII was aware of all those things, nothing stopped his resolution and lust for Anne. [23]

According to Carolly Erickson, Henry visited Catherine to tell her that their marriage was over as if it had never existed, and that was up to Catherine to decide when and where she would move out of the palace. She knew about Henry's intentions already a few months before he visited her but until she could hear that from him personally, she still hoped in different ending. This obviously made her very upset. [24]

The topic how Henry arrived at his decision has been discussed by many historians. Both David Starkey and Carolly Erickson mentioned two possible explanations. The first being the question of succession as Henry was still without a male successor and the second was a potential curse which had been hanging over the marriage. [25] Henry talked about the curse with John Longland, bishop of Lincoln, who was later accused of exhortation to the divorce. [26] The divorce was not supported by majority of Henry's courtiers and naturally by Catherine's relatives and resulted in split of Henry's family because his own sister took Catherine's side. [27]

Catherine was very educated woman and looked up to her mother Isabella. She was very influenced by her as she was a natural ruler which helped Catherine when Henry decided to invade France in 1513 and she had to substitute him until he got back to England. She had to face invasion of the Scots King James IV. The English army defeated both French and Scots (for more details, see 4.3). [28]

#### 3.1.1 Break with the Church of Rome

Henry and his officers in head with Thomas Cromwell tried to find every possible way how to annul his marriage with Catherine. Finally they found a verse in Leviticus 20: 21 which says: "And if a man shall take his brother's wife, it is an unclean thing: he hath uncovered his brother's

nakedness; they shall be childless." [29]

However, this statement was in a stark contrast with a verse in Deuteronomy:

If brethren dwell together, and one of them die, and have no child, the wife of the dead shall not marry without unto a stranger: her husband's brother shall go in unto her, and take her to him to wife, and perform the duty of an husband's brother unto her. [30]

In other words, Henry doubted the Papal dispensation which the Pope Julius II had issued. He wanted to deny that he had ever been married to Catherine. Some historical sources mention that the marriage between Arthur and Catherine was not consummated, other sources cite words that Arthur said before their wedding night and after the nights he had spent with Catherine. [31]

Although Catherine was only 16 and Arthur was 15 years old when they got married, at times it was possible or even a duty to have sex in young age in order to product heirs. The first reason was the well-known fact that productivity declines with increasing age and other reasons were some threats in form of various diseases, enemies or traitors which were constantly hanging over kings' lives. Thus, a king wanted to assure his successor as soon as possible. Wives could not say no when their husbands wanted sex. They were more like their husbands' property. Moreover, it was inadmissible for a woman, especially a queen to be unfaithful although a king was allowed to have mistresses. [32]

The marriage between Henry and Catherine was ended by the annulment in 1533. She had never accepted it and until she died, she considered herself the Queen of England. [33]

#### 3.2 Anne Boleyn

Although the marriage between Henry and Catherine of Aragon was not officially annulled yet, Henry married Anne Boleyn on 25 January 1533. She already expected a baby. The annulment of marriage between Henry and Catherine was claimed four months later. Less than two months after the annulment, Henry was excommunicated by Clement's Bull and on 17 November 1538 excommunicated by the Pope. That meant his final break from the Church of Rome. [34]

Anne Boleyn was a younger sister of Mary Boleyn, Henry's mistress, and a daughter of a diplomat Sir Thomas Boleyn. Since her father was very influential, he was able to assure very good education for her. When she was 12 years old, she was sent abroad to learn French in Netherlands in household of Archduchess Margaret of Austria as one of her maids of honour. She had a French tutor there and had to write letters to her father in French. She stayed there for about 18 months and then she went to the French court where she stayed until she was 20 years old. With her father's help again, she became a maid of honour to Mary Tudor, Henry's sister who was made to marry French King Louis XII. She served Queen Mary together with her sister Mary. In 1515 when the King of France died and Mary secretly married Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk, and returned to England, Anne and her sister Mary moved to serve Queen Claude of Valois. Under the influence of the French court. each sister grew up in different ways. Unlike her sister Mary, who became a mistress of Henry VIII, Anne was more unobtrusive and dignified. [35]

Anne left the French court in January 1522 because of an imminent war between England and France and in 1523 she became a maid of honour to Catherine of Aragon. [36] Her personal charm did not lie in her physical appearance. According to Carolly Erickson's

description, she was small, had small breasts although at times the opposite was fashionable. She had long dark hair, dark eyes and her skin was sallow. There were many small moles on her body and a big mole on her neck and she had an extra atrophied finger. Thus her physical appearance was not the reason why she had many admirers. It was her personality and sex-appeal which were formed during the years that she spent in France and with which Henry VIII fell in love. She was very charming, graceful and elegant. [37] She was taught to sing, to dance and to play the musical instruments. She introduced French fashion to Henry's court. The fashion was followed by the fashionable ladies and later by her maids of honour. She knew how to seduce a man and she was expert in intrigues. One of her admirers was Lord Henry Percy to whom Anne was secretly betrothed. However, the betrothal was broken a year later by Cardinal Wolsey as soon as he found out because Lord Percy had been betrothed to Lady Mary Talbot since 1516. Anne was sent to her father's mansion at Hever and was very angry with Wolsey and since then, there was hostility between them. Anne wanted to take revenge upon him as soon as possible which was also an interest of her family. They wanted to ruin him completely and they wanted to do it through the King. [38]

Few years later she returned to the queen's household and Henry VIII started showing his affection for her, but she refused being his mistress. She took an example by her sister Mary who ended up without any pension after Henry's affection for her faded away. The King was not used to this behaviour so Anne became more desirable for him. Later they started showing up in public together. Anne ate with him, danced with him, hunt with him but she refused to sleep with him until he married her and that was how the chase after the annulment of his first marriage started. [39]

The King's divorce was followed by unrest among his courtiers and unlike Catherine, Anne became very unpopular at the court. She was accused of the King's break with Rome, bad influence on Henry, interference with political and religious issues and thereupon called many vulgar words. The public opinion was also affected by her failure to give birth to a son and by political executions of 1535, especially executions of a councillor Thomas Moore and Bishop John Fisher. [40] As Alison Weir wrote in her book: "She had succeeded in making enemies of those who might have been her friends, and had displayed an unbecoming eagerness to wreak vengeance upon her enemies." [41]

## 3.2.1 Struggle for a son

Anne did not give Henry a male heir. After giving birth to the first child, the royal couple was disappointed. It was a girl. She was christened Elizabeth. Elizabeth replaced Catherine's daughter Mary as a legitimate heir to the English throne. While humiliating her stepdaughter, Anne tried to assure the best things for her daughter although they did not live in the same household. Mary was sent to Hatfield to serve as a maid of honour to the Princess Elizabeth. Nevertheless, Henry did not consider any female heir as a real heir. He desperately wanted a son and Anne was aware of that. If she had given birth to a son, especially to a son who would have survived infancy, she could have been confident about her future. This way she was scared that when Henry had annuled his first marriage he could do it again. After other pregnancies followed by miscarriages, Henry remembered the old curse and wanted to get rid of Anne. This happened again with the assistance of his chief minister Thomas Cromwell. [42]

The marriage between Henry and Anne was not ideal. It was very unbalanced. The miscarriages and failure to produce a male heir were causes of Anne's frustration which reflected her physical appearance and psychology, but mostly they influenced Henry's affection for Anne and Anne lost the major part of her influence on him. [43] According to Alison Weir, the King had mistresses already during Anne's first pregnancy when she was busy with preparations for the birth and was not able to satisfy him in bed. When she found out, she made a scene. Since then she was very jealous and their marriage went downhill. Unlike Catherine of Aragon, she refused to be what was expected from her as the Queen of England, to be submissive and to abide King's affairs. Henry later regretted having married her and started to court one of Anne's maid of honour, Jane Seymour. [44]

#### 3.2.2 Executions

As Henry wanted to avoid another divorce or other legal proceedings, Alison Weir mentions that once there was an idea that Anne could be accused of witchcraft because of her extra nail and moles on her body which were some of the typical signs how to recognize a witch. Nevertheless, this idea was abandoned because of a lack of the evidence. Finally, after long considerations, Cromwell decided to use Anne's sex-appeal against her and on 2<sup>nd</sup> May 1536 Anne was accused of high treason, incest with her brother George, Duke of Rochford and multiple adultery and was taken to the Tower. The warrant for her arrest was read to her by her uncle, Duke of Norfolk. Anne answered: "If it be his Majesty's pleasure, I am ready to obey." [45]

During the trial, all the details of her accusation were read. She was found guilty not only of the reasons mentioned above but also of

having poisoned Catherine of Aragon and of an intention to do the same to Catherine's daughter Mary. [46]

The woman, because of whom Henry broke with Church of Rome and made himself the Supreme Head of English Church in order to marry her, was executed in the morning on 19 May 1536 and her daughter Elizabeth was declared a bastard. [47]

Standing on the scaffold she said:

Good Christian people, I am come hither to die, for according to the law, and by the law I am judged, and therefore I will speak nothing against it. I am come hither to accuse no man, nor to speak anything of that, whereof I am accused and condemned to die, but I pray God save the King and send him long reign over you, for a gentler nor a more merciful prince was there never: and to me he was ever a gentle, a good and a sovereign lord. [48]

## 3.3 Jane Seymour

In ways similar to how Henry was manipulated by Anne, this time it was Jane Seymour who used her seductive abilities to gain his affection already before Anne's execution. Ten days after the execution, they got married. Because of a bad financial situation, the King could not afford expenses for Jane's coronation immediately. The coronation ceremony were supposed to take place in October but it had to be postponed again, this time because of sweating sickness and rebellion in England. [49]

## 3.3.1 Radical changes

Jane was the exact opposite of Anne regarding her physical appearance, her style of clothing and also her religious beliefs. Unlike Anne, she admired Queen Catherine to whom she had been a lady-in-

waiting and used her as her own role model when being the Queen. She wanted her ladies-in-waiting to wear traditional English dress and she supported the Catholic Church. The changes that Jane had introduced were accepted by Henry and his court with a relief. One of Henry's oldest friends described the situation: "We have come from hell into heaven." [50]

Jane had tried to interfere with political and religious affairs. She begged the King to make Mary an heir to the throne. Although she was not successful in this mission, she redounded reconciliation between the King and his daughter Mary. The King received an apologizing letter from Mary and Mary was welcome back at the court. Later he proved to be a loving father again. [51]

Jane also tried to make Henry focus on matters of an increasing unrest in the north of England. The rebels protested against dissolution of monasteries and heavy taxes, the results of English reformation (for more details, see 5.1). However, Catherine's influence on Henry was not as big as Cromwell's and the English reform continued. After asking the King to restore at least the small monasteries, she met with his anger and was warned not to interfere in politics again. Alisson Weir considers the rebellion as the worst crisis of Henry's reign which was successfully overcome. However, this cruel behaviour met with strong retaliation from his wife who was pregnant at that time. [52]

The marriage between Henry and Jane lasted only 16 months because Jane died on 24 October 1537, a few days after giving birth to the son for whom Henry had waited so long. As the only one of Henry's wives, she had a queen's funeral and was buried in St. George's Chapel. Henry was devastated and he had no appetite for getting married again. [53]

#### 3.4 Anne of Cleves

After Jane's death Cromwell pushed Henry to marry again. To prevent spread of Catholicism he urged him to marry Anne of Cleves from Germany. Henry's court artist Hans Holbein was sent to Germany to make a portrait of Henry's wife-to-be. The King wanted to make sure that he would find her attractive. However, under Cromwell's instructions Holbein concentrated more on Anne's dress than on her face and Henry sent for her. When Anne safely arrived at Rochester, he visited her. He was furious because he did not find her attractive at all and accused Cromwell of having matched him with Anne because of political reasons and imprisoned him on 10 June 1540. In spite of Henry's antipathy, a marriage treaty was signed. [54]

Anne of Cleves was not much educated, she could read and write only in the German language, but she had other virtues. She was good at needlework and liked playing cards. [55]

Nevertheless, history repeated itself. Henry tried to find any way to escape from the forced marriage and to marry young Catherine Howard, Anne's lady-in-waiting. Anne was not aware of the fact that anything could have been wrong. According to Dr. David Starkey, she differed from Henry's previous wives in the way she was brought up. She was not much educated and was very naive. He mentions an example that Anne thought that Henry's kisses could make her pregnant. [56]

On 9 July 1540 their marriage was pronounced invalid on the basis of witness' statements that the marriage had not been consummated. Although she got a title of Henry's sister, with a huge settlement and was often invited to the court, she was often lonely and unhappy as she confessed in some letters. [57]

#### 3.5 Catherine Howard

Henry and Catherine Howard got secretly married two weeks after the annulment of Henry's fourth marriage to Anne of Cleves. David Starkey says that it was love at first sight for Henry, but how could very young Catherine fall for Henry who was fifty and obese at that time? During the ceremony of their marriage, Henry was not able to dance because at that time he already suffered from varicose ulcer (for more details, see 5.3.1). [58]

As Catherine was young she did not know what being a queen entailed. Although she found some solace in the benefits of being a queen, such as the title Queen of England, wealth, power, diversion, beautiful clothes and King's favour, her happiness did not last long. [59]

Catherine's family belonged amongst the most powerful families in Tudor times. Catherine was Anne Boleyn's cousin and niece of Duke of Norfolk. Like in the case of Anne Boleyn's marriage to Henry, Duke of Norfolk wanted to use his second niece to increase his power and wealth. However, he had many opponents. [60]

Although Catherine was almost a child in comparison with other Henry's wives, she already had a past, even a doubtful past. Thus after Catherine's marriage to the King, Norfolk's opponents wanted to prevent his rise and they decided to use Catherine's doubtful past against both Catherine and her uncle. Catherine made it even easier for them when a tension between the King and her appeared. Despite her age Catherine was not pregnant yet. Although the King had a son already, he still wanted to assure his successor. [61]

One of the Duke's biggest opponents was Thomas Cranmer, Archbishop of Canterbury who revealed Catherine's secrets to Henry. Although Henry did not believe him, he wanted to make sure and ordered and investigation. Results of the investigation meant Catherine's execution. She was accused of having intercourse with Francis Dereham, a secretary of the Dowager Duchess' household where Catherine stayed before coming at the court, Henry Mannox, a music teacher, and then with Thomas Culpeper, Henry's favourite courtier. One of Catherine's love letters to Culpeper was found. They promised love to each other. Although he denied having had intercourse with the Queen, a testimony of Jane Rochford, widow of Anne Boleyn's brother, was enough for the King to prove them guilty. She claimed that Thomas Culpeper had visited the Queen in her room several times. Both Culpeper and the Queen admitted being in love with each other but denied any intimacy between them. All Catherine's lovers were sentenced to death by hanging, cutting down alive, disemboweling, beheading and quartering. Catherine was arrested and taken to the Tower. The day before her execution she wanted private execution block to be brought to her room so that she could practise. The block had also been requested by her cousin Anne Boleyn before her own execution. [61]

After Catherine's execution, several members of her family were arrested. Another unsuccessful marriage made Henry introduce a new law about pre-marriage affairs concerning any treasons. [62]

#### 3.6 Catherine Parr

Although getting older and suffering from his personal failure intensified by the execution of Catherine Howard, Henry wanted to get married again. This time he chose Catherine Parr. Unlike "teenage girl" Catherine Howard, Catherine Parr was a lady in her thirties who had been married twice. She took care of her second husband because he was an invalid. This experience of her appeared useful when Henry was ill. [63]

In spring 1533 Henry fell in love with her and decided to marry her but there was an obstacle. While being in her second marriage, Jane was already in love with Thomas Seymour, Jane Seymour's brother. Henry VIII solved this situation by sending Thomas to become a resident ambassador in Brussels and then proposed Catherine. They got married on 12 July 1533. As Henry adopted the title King of Ireland, Catherine became Queen of England and Ireland. [64]

Unlike all Henry's wives, Catherine married Henry because, she believed, she had been ordered by God. She had written some religious books, that's how her radical religious beliefs are known. Henry and Catherine often sat down and discussed religion. She turned out to be an ideal companion for the King and she got on well with her step-children whom she tried to infix her religion too. Later when Henry was very ill, she tried to take advantage of his deteriorating health to convince him to agree and follow her religious beliefs. Her faith was very radical and there came a time when she crossed the limits, an investigation against her was ordered. A warrant for the Queen's arrest were issued and next day Henry's men came for her. They were sent away because after the Queen visited him in his room to defend herself, he believed in her innocence. [65]

Before Henry died he was urged to come together with his daughters Mary and Elizabeth and give them the right of succession after his son Edward. In conformity with Act of Succession which were agreed on during Henry's third marriage to Jane Seymour the succession fell on Edward (for more details, see 4.1). [66]

#### 4 POLITICS

The strength of the monarchy depended more on finance than politics. Nevertheless, political affairs during Henry's reign were not negligible and were highly influenced by intrigues and everyone's endeavour to achieve their biggest influence and wealth.

#### 4.1 Role of Parliament

There was not any significant progress of the influence of Parliament during the Tudor period. Its importance was in various kinds of its usage by the individual monarchs. Henry VIII mainly used it to accomplish his religious changes, very often during English reformation, to settle the succession, to modify taxation or to achieve his political objectives including treaties, invasions, etc. The two great centres of power were the Council and the Household. The Council was the executive body which consisted of about 40 members who were appointed or dismissed only by the King. The Council performed business, diplomatic, military, financial, administrative and judicial work. During the period of Thomas Cromwell, it met regularly throughout the year. [67]

Here are some examples of tasks with which Parliament was occupied during Henry's reign:

- In 1510 taxes on import and export were granted. [68]
- On 8 June 1536 Parliament was open to discussions on questions of succession in respect to King's perils after his two unlawful marriages. Later a new Act of Succession was accepted. This Act assured succession of Jane Seymour's children. [69]
- In 1523 the House of Commons was not willing to grant the taxes

that Wolsey required, and the Act of Proclamations of 1539, which allowed the King to pass laws, was largely amended to meet parliamentary objections. Nevertheless, Parliament was not allowed to check over government. Only Henry as the monarch had the right of dissolution. [70]

 In 1532 Parliament discussed an Act of Appeals. When the law was passed, Henry's first marriage was annuled and was followed by his excommunication (for more details, see 3.1.1). [71]

## 4.2 Thomas Wolsey

Thomas Wolsey, better known as Cardinal Wolsey or Lord Chancellor, once King's favourite did not enjoy the same admiration from the King when he failed to secure Henry's divorce from his first wife Catherine of Aragon in 1529. It left him a desperate, lonely, confused, and scared man. Once he lost the King's favour he started to live in doubt and insecurity. Although the power of the King seemed to be overshadowed, it was still him who could decide about everyone's fate. Nevertheless, Henry gave Wolsey management of political and religious matters in the whole kingdom. He put his trust in the Cardinal and did not know much about what was going on. He was not like his father Henry VII who had cared about the political issues and had control over it. [72]

Foreign ambassadors said about the King's minister that "he had the management of the whole kingdom". [73] Bishop Fox, by whom young Henry had been baptised, wrote about Wolsey: "We have to deal with a cardinal who is not cardinal but King." [74] However, any reasons from Henry's lack of interest in political issues to unreserved confidence in Wolsey's loyalty Henry had, there were some principles he followed and did not allow anyone to do things behind his back.

Wolsey's collapse came in 1527 when he was in France where he wanted to effect the take-over of the Catholic Church while the pope was captured. He found out that the King had left him out of a political affair. The royal messenger who was sent to the Pope Clement VII was not allowed to share his secrets with Wolsey. Wolsey got dismissed and Sir Thomas Moore replaced him. [75]

Although Henry seemed to confer honour to many people without their merits, Wolsey obtained many titles as a result of his efforts he did for Henry himself or for the whole kingdom. All his titles made him a powerful man who lived in "the grandest style, flaunting his wealth and basking in pomp". [76] It made him unpopular among the nobles and in Parliament. Henry gave him palaces in Whitehall and Hampton Court. Hampton Court was originally built as a private house but it became Wolsey's house. However, it was taken from him in 1529 for Henry himself after Cardinal was not able to convince the Pope to grant Henry's divorce from Catherine of Aragon. [77]

## 4.3 The King's Navy

After his father's death, Henry inherited his ships. There were two excellent ships among them called Sovereign and Regent. Rebuilding Sovereign, building two other ships and buying three other ships with the objective to convert them into war ships introduced the beginning of Henry's powerful Navy. [78]

Henry's love for ships along with his technical knowledge and ideas to use sea power efficiently enabled him to become minister of his Navy at its beginning. His first opportunity to prove to be an extraordinary leader of his Navy came during an Anglo-Spanish invasion of France in 1512. The English Navy won a sea battle and landed to wait for Spanish

army to join them. Nevertheless, the Spanish King Ferdinand had other plans. He wanted to take advantage of the presence of the English army on Spanish border with France and invaded Navarre himself. Ferdinand thereupon accused Henry of bringing his troops back to England and Henry was ridiculed. [79]

In order to regain his reputation, Henry decided to invade France from the north in person in 1513. The expensive preparations were held by Wolsey. The English army were determined to cross the Channel and with the assistance of the Holy Roman Emperor Maxmilian I to conquer Calais. Some ships of Henry's Navy were sunk but after the Battle of the Guinegâte and the fall of Tournai, Henry returned to England victorious. In spite of the strong Navy which Henry VIII had at his disposal, James IV, the King of Scots, ventured to declare war against England during Henry's absence. Unfortunately for him, he was confronted with immaculate military skills of Catherine of Aragon appointed Regent during Henry's absence and was defeated at Flodden in one of the great medieval battles.

## 4.3.1 Foreign trade

Foreign trade consisted of export of food, clothes and other commodities. Export provided employment for some people and offered an easy way to increase national wealth.

The greatest amount of goods went to the Low Countries which spread from the area of current Belgium, Netherlands, Luxembourg, the North of France to parts of the West of Germany and through these countries the export was to Germany, Spain and Italy (see Appendix 12). Most of those countries were under the rule of the Emperor so good relationship between him and Henry VIII was necessary for exchange of

goods. Different kinds of goods were imported and exported out of England. [82]

## 4.3.1.1 Food export

The major influences upon food in the Tudor times came from France, the Far East and the New World.

With discovery of America, so called the New World at times, by Christopher Columbus in 1492, variety of different foods were brought to England. The supply to England was ensured mostly by the Spanish and the Portuguese. Food such as turkey, maize, corn, peanuts, cashews and chocolate were in demand. Vegetables such as potatoes, even though considered unhealthy due to the myth that they were grown underground, tomatoes, beans or peppers were also introduced. Different kinds of fruits such as pineapple or avocado were also exported. However, Spice Trade which was given the biggest importance during the reign of Elizabeth I, a daughter of Henry VIII, played a key role of English Trade already during Henry's reign. The foreign trade became the main element of the profitability of the English Kingdom. Spices such as cayenne pepper, chilli, paprika, vanilla were brought from America. [83] Ivory was brought from Guinea and dyewood from Brazil. [84]

The Normans had merit in introducing French and Scandinavian food, whereas thanks to the crusaders, the Italians influenced English kitchen by the supply of spices from the Far East countries. After Vasco de Gama's voyages the Portuguese replaced Italy as the main supplier of spices to England. Some of the important spices exported from the Far East were cardamon, cinnamon, cloves, coriander, cumin and nutmeg. [85]

## 4.3.1.2 Cloth export

Cloth Export offered part-time jobs and supported development of agriculture. Export of wool during Henry's reign it became very profitable. Nevertheless, high expenses of Henry's wars and the rise in prices caused the crisis and the cloth exportation had to be reduced. It resulted in decrease in employment. [86]

## 4.3.2 English expeditions

As Henry did not want to be left behind in matters of discoveries and the future of England was seen in the oceanic trades, the King with assistance of Thomas Wolsey along with other visionaries formulated plans for realization of these issues. Although some of their ideas were not accomplished during Henry's reign, actual accomplishment came during the reign of Henry's daughter Elizabeth I who utilised the ideas of her noblemen very efficiently. [87]

In 1527 two of his ships were sent on an expedition commanded by John Rut. Henry approached the Northwest Passage, a route through the Arctic ocean along the north of North America. This expedition had been already attempted by Henry's father in 1497 in order to find a direct route to the Orient. After losing one of the ships and changing the course southwards John Rut's expedition was the first English expedition that landed in the West Indies. His attempt to trade at Santo Domingo failed when his ship was put to flight by the Spanish. [88]

#### 5 THE CHURCH

Everyday life in Tudor times was conducted by the clergy. The clergy were highly supported by rents and fees for multiple occasions and their wealth was apparent. In spiritual matters the Church obeyed more to the pope than to the king and during reign of Henry VIII it was not different. [89]

In many aspects the clergy seemed to be independent to Henry VIII and in the House of Lords the number of clerical representatives was superior to the number of peers. Their obedience can not be specified as some of them recognized the Pope as their supreme head and the others recognized the King. [90]

In the 16th century religious beliefs became fatal for many people who tried not to share the King's religious persuasion. One of them was Sir Thomas More, Henry's important councillor. Henry appreciated services More offered to him and only seldom dispensed without them. <sup>[91]</sup> However, their coaction as well as their friendship did not end well. As More respected papal supremacy, he refused to accept the annulment of Henry's first marriage which was considered a treason and was executed by decapitation in 1535. <sup>[92]</sup>

## 5.1 English reformation

English reformation was inevitable. The need for the Church transformation including jurisdiction, finance and lives of clergy accumulated already at the times of Wolsey's domination. The Kingdom of Henry VIII called for being reformed for a long time but the biggest change came in 1534 when Henry declared himself Supreme Head of the Church and stopped respecting papal authority. [93]

During Henry's reign a new learning called Protestantism started to make its own way supported by Luther's books in 1521. Although Henry VIII ordered to burn the books, their reading spread and the impact on people was considerable. Anyone that supported this learning and its proliferation was considered a heretic and people accused of heresy were burnt at the stake. Thomas Cranmer was one of them. [94]

After the break with Rome English reformation continued by dissolution of small monasteries which had low income and all the money went to the royal treasury. The monks were given pensions and moved to bigger monasteries. <sup>[95]</sup> Dissolution of a quarter of monasteries in the north of England, mostly in Yorkshire and Lincolnshire, resulted in a rebellion (see Appendix 13). This rebellion known as the Pilgrimage of Grace was led by Robert Aske. Many churches were destroyed and the rising spread. Henry had to but negotiate. Although he went with his wife Jane Seymour to the north with the pretext of calming the situation, the rebels could not escape his vindictive nature and were ultimately punished. They were captured and their bodies were left hanging on gibbets for months. Robert Aske was arrested and hanged in chains until he died of starvation. <sup>[96]</sup>

For years Henry went on dissolving monasteries, encouraging New learning by the Ten articles which caused destruction of relics and his marriage to Anne of Cleves impulsed by Cromwell promoted the Protestantism while Henry was unaware of it. In order to reinforce the Catholicism Henry issued some books about religious doctrines in 1543. [97]

#### **6 HENRY'S PASSIONS**

#### 6.1 Music and poetry

Henry VIII was very musical and poetical person. He liked folk music and singing with his courtiers. [98] He wrote some songs and poems himself. Here is an example of a short poem which is called *Oh*, *my heart!*:

O, my heart! and O, my heart, It is so sore! Since I must needs from my Love depart; And know no cause wherefore! [99]

He had a big collection of lutes but he was able to play other musical instruments too. [100] In the picture The Psalter of Henry VIII, which was painted between 1530-1547, there is Henry playing the Celtic harp called clàrsach (see Appendix 14).

## 6.2 Hunting

Hunting was Henry's big passion. It allowed him to escape from duties and politics. He enjoyed hunting with his wives who shared his passion for it. Those were Anne Boleyn and Jane Seymour.

Henry was very good at archery and was a great rider. He was able to ride a horse for hours and to exhaust many horses while hunting. He hunted birds, fish, wild boar and deer. His favourite place for hunting was Stoke Newington, London. [101]

#### 6.3 Jousting

Jousting was a game of two armoured knights riding horses and using lances. The aim was to hit the rival with the end of the lance. The jousting tournaments usually celebrated some events such as a marriage, a child-birth, a reunion of kings, etc.

When Henry was 14, he started writing letters to Philip the Fair, archduke of Burgundy, who visited the English court during his way to Spain. Although Philip was 17 years older than Henry, they became pen friends. After Philip's death, Henry took up jousting because it was Philip's favourite sport. He practised every day but was not allowed to participate because it was too dangerous for him as the future. [102]

When he grew up he started to participate in tournaments. In the book *The Oxford Illustrated History of the British Monarchy*, there is a picture of Henry VIII jousting to celebrate the birth of their son (see Appendix 16).

## 6.3.1 Injuries and their impacts

As this sport was very dangerous, Henry got injured in some tournaments. Most of them had lifelong impact on his health.

In 1524 he forgot to put the visor down on his helmet and was hit by a lance. He was lucky that he did not lose his eye. Since that incidence he was having very bad migraine headaches. [103]

The worst injury came in 1527 when his leg was badly injured in another jousting tournament. Since then he had varicose ulcer, wounds which appear when the blood builds up in vessels and leaks out. At times an infection became a big problem because it could have led to blood poisoning. There are some scientists' opinions that those wounds could

have been caused by a fashionable garter Henry wore. He was cured but still suffered from leg ulcer. These wounds healed very slowly and could never be cured completely. [104]

In January 1536 he had another jousting accident which he survived just because of his armour and after which he was unconscious for 2 hours. His leg stopped draining and his doctors had to cauterise it with hot iron. [105]

At his last years although he still kept riding a horse, he became very obese and was carried on a sedan chair around his palaces. According to Starkey, his obesity was attributed to his leg injury which was very painful and disabled him to do as many activities as before. [106]

#### 6.4 Real tennis

He was a real tennis player. Real tennis which is called "the sport of kings" is like squash and tennis in one and it's played indoor. In 1530 Henry built real tennis court at Hampton Court. It was the first real tennis court in England and matches are played there till this day (see Appendix 18). [107]

In 1527 he wrenched his foot in real tennis game and had to wear special slippers. In sympathy to Henry the male courtiers wore them too. [108]

#### 6.5 Science

He enjoyed knowledge in medicine and had a keen interest in science. He made many medicines, liniments, etc. One of his inventions was "the king's plaster", a remedy which contained of about 25

ingredients and some of them were poisonous. This remedy was devised as a treatment for Henry's ulcerous legs. [109]

#### **6.6** Food

Food in the Tudor times presented a part of people's leisure time in the court. Every feast or banquet was accompanied by food of exquisite taste because Henry VIII was famous for his voracious appetite and delicacy. Gallons of ale and wine were drunk at a feast of Henry VIII. [110]

As a member of royal family, Henry VIII was taught table manners when he was a kid. If he had put his fingers in his ears or nose or put his hands on his head or blown his nose with them, he would have been hit with his tutor's stick. [111]

At Hampton Court Palace, there are the biggest surviving kitchens of Henry VIII. It has become a tourist place. The food is still cooked there by the recipes which were used for cooking for Henry using the same cookery techniques and preparing the dishes on the same furniture.

## 6.6.1 Dishes at Henry's court

Among dishes prepared at Henry's court belonged spit-roasted meat, grilled beavers' tails, whale meat, roasted peacock, internal organs, black pudding, boar's head, roasted swan and spiced fruitcake.

Roasted meat was affordable only for wealthy people because the process of roasting needed a spit boy to turn the spit whole day and more fuel was required for it compared to other kinds of preparation. Roasted meat was made from different species of pigs, wild boars, oxen, sheep,

deer, etc. [112]

In order to keep Christian tradition on Fridays, which meant no consumption of meat on Fridays, fillets of whales hunted in the North Sea or grilled beaver's tails were prepared because both were considered being fish at times. [113]

Not to waste any part of an animal, lungs, spleen, udders and other internal organs were cooked in Middle Ages by Henry's numerous staff. They were considered healthy and were cooked more often than vegetable which was looked upon as the food of the poor. Pigs' intestines were filled with boiled blood of animals. [114] This dish called black pudding has survived till today in some countries including Great Britain.

Roasted swans and boars' heads were prepared only for special occasions because they were considered a delicacy. [115]

Among desserts served at the court spiced fruitcake was common, although desserts were not much popular. This cake was special as there was a hidden pea or been in it and the person that found it was greeted as the King's guest and honoured during the feast. [116]

#### 7 CONCLUSION

The reign of Henry VIII and his personality can be divided into two parts which differ in many aspects with respect to time. The first part can be characterized by a constant development of Henry's personality, his intellect and his moderate attitude which were mainly influenced by his father Henry VII, and the second part of his reign reflects deterioration of his personality. Nevertheless, the time of Henry VIII asked for a despotic rule.

Henry's egoistic attitude, though harmless at the beginning, contributed to his break with the Church of Rome after the repudiation of papal supremacy which obstructed Henry's divorce from his first wife Catherine of Aragon and which resulted in English reformation. By realisation that the authority of the Pope which was negligible consisted in people's moral persuasion more than in anything else, he declared himself the Supreme Head of the Church.

For the attainment of the welfare of the Kingdom and his personal interests, with regard to his subjects' material interests and their indifference to political affairs, Henry was able to do anything. The interests of the State for Henry himself were superior to justice and morality. However, it does not mean that Henry did not respect the law. When he wanted to "get rid of" somebody that seemed to be dangerous for him or inconvenient for his future plans, he dealt such rebellions with either exile, in worse case, accused them of high treason which meant punishment by death according to the law.

Henry as a man of action who was not afraid to risk was a king England needed for its reformation which hanged over it for a long time.

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- **5**. Ibid., p. 73.
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- 8. Ibid.
- 9. Erickson, C. Jindřich Veliký, p. 41-42.
- 10. lbid., p. 49.
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- 13. Ibid. episode 1.
- 14. Ibid. episode 2.
- 15. Ibid. episode 3.
- 16. Weir, A. The Six Wives of Henry VIII, p. 6.
- **17**. Erickson, op.cit., p. 34.
- 18. Ibid., p. 46
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- 31. The Six Wives of Henry VIII [online], episode 1.
- 32. Weir, op.cit. p. 6.
- 33. The Six Wives of Henry VIII [online], episode 2.
- 34. Ibid.
- 35. Weir, op.cit., p.148-150.
- **36**. Ibid., p. 155.
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- 38. The Six Wives of Henry VIII [online], episode 2.
- 39. Ibid.
- 40. Ibid.
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- 45. Ibid., p. 316.

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- 51. Weir, op.cit., p. 352.
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- 58. Ibid., episode 4.
- 59. Ibid.
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- 63. The Six Wives of Henry VIII [online], episode 4.
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- 66. Ibid.
- 67. Cannon, Griffiths, op.cit., p. 304.
- 68. Williamson, op.cit., p. 76.
- 69. Weir, op.cit., p. 350.

- 70. Cannon, Griffiths, op.cit., p. 304.
- 71. Williamson, op.cit., p. 129.
- 72. Cannon, Griffiths, op.cit., p. 304.
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### 10 ABSTRACT

The Bachelor's thesis describes the life of Henry VIII, the political changes achieved during his reign which were not negligible at all, the role of the church at the time of Henry VIII and its necessary reformation. It also provides information on his married life and the lives of his six wives, Catherine of Aragon, Anne Boleyn, Jane Seymour, Anne of Cleves, Catherine Howard and Catherine Parr. The thesis also describes his hobbies and his interests including music and poetry, hunting, jousting, real tennis, the game of kings, then science and his passion for food.

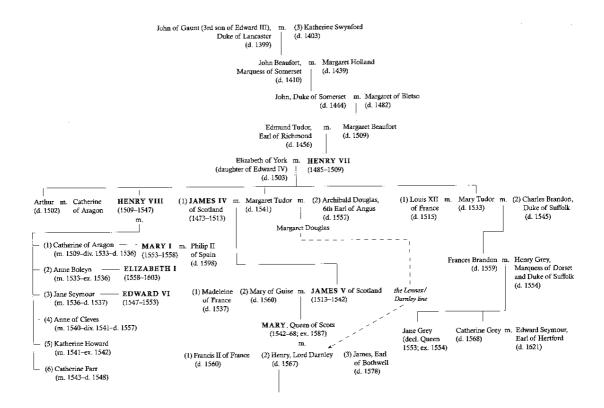
### 11 RESUMÉ

Bakalářská práce se zabývá životem Jindřicha VIII., politickými změnami za jeho vlády, které se nedají opomenout, rolí církve za dob Jindřicha VIII. a její nevyhnutelnou reformací. Také popisuje jeho manželský život a životy jeho šesti manželek, Kateřiny Aragonské, Anny Boleynové, Jany Seymourové, Anny Klévské, Kateřiny Howardové a Kateřiny Parrové. A závěr práce je zaměřen na jeho záliby v podobě hudby a básnictví, lovu, rytířských turnajů, skutečného tenisu, vědy a jeho slabosti pro jídlo.

#### 12 APPENDICES

### Appendix 1

### Tudor family tree



#### Available from:

http://englishhistory.net/tudor/tudortree.bmp.

Portrait of Henry VIII at about age 40 by Joos van Cleeve



### Available from:

http://historymedren.about.com/od/picturegalleries/ig/The-Tudor-Dynasty/10henry8at40.htm.

### The wives of Henry VIII



#### Available from:

http://www.btinternet.com/~j.larmouth/sarah-jayne/wives/wives.html.

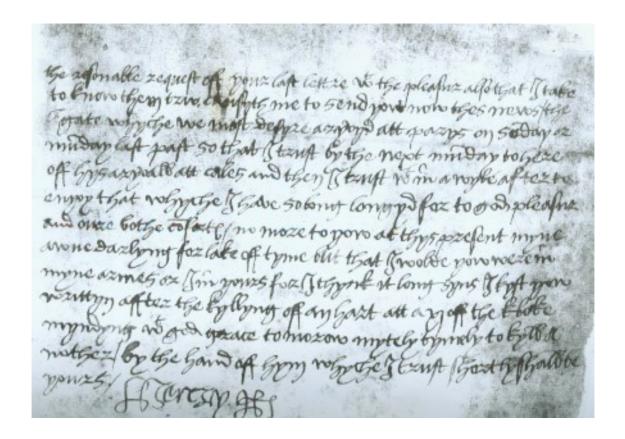
16th century woodcut of the coronation of Henry VIII and Catherine of Aragon showing their heraldic badges, the Tudor rose and the pomegranate



#### Available from:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Henry\_VIII\_Catherine\_of\_Aragon\_coronat ion\_woodcut.jpg.

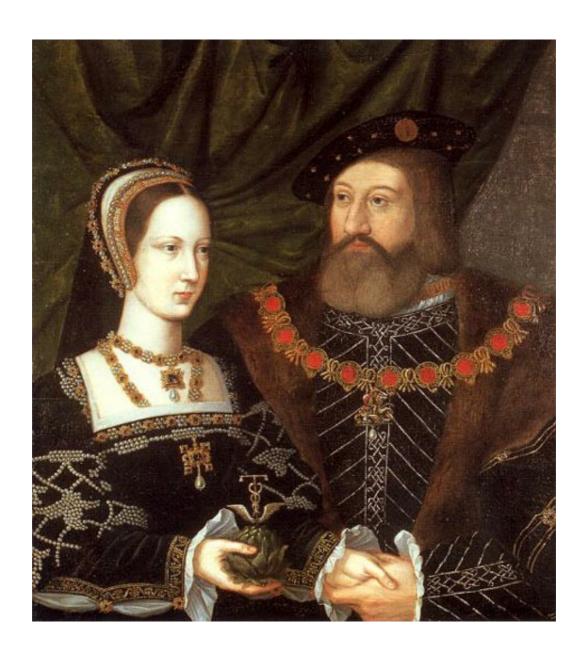
An example of a love letter from Henry VIII to Anne Boleyn



#### Available from:

https://mywebspace.wisc.edu/dgehring/web/hist361/week4.html.

The marriage portrait of Mary Tudor, Henry's sister, and Charles Brandon, Henry's lifelong friend



#### Available from:

http://englishhistory.net/tudor/relative/brandon.html.

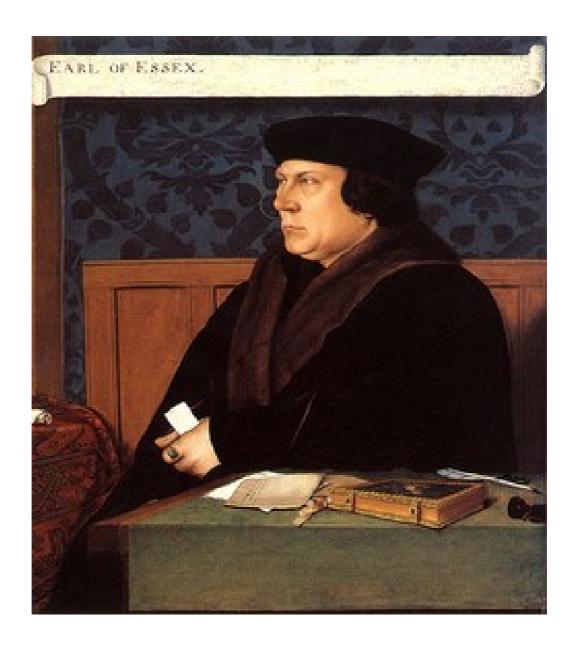
## The portrait of Cardinal Wolsey



### Available from:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thomas\_Wolsey.

## The portrait of Thomas Cromwell



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http://aktualne.centrum.cz/kultura/umeni/clanek.phtml?id=649474.

## The portrait of Thomas More



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## The portrait of Thomas Cranmer



### Available from:

http://stevehaskett78.wordpress.com/tag/durham/.

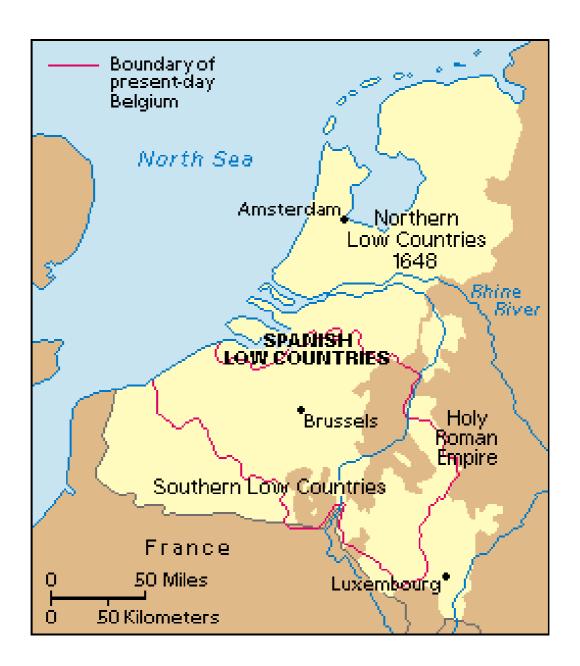
# Henry's armour from his early twenties



Available from:

http://tudorhistory.org/henry8/gallery.html.

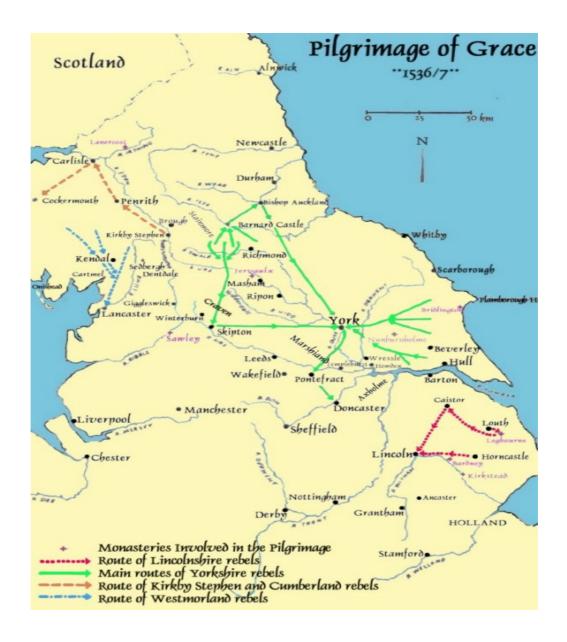
Low countries in the 16<sup>th</sup> century



#### Available from:

http://history.howstuffworks.com/european-history/history-of-europe5.htm.

# The Pilgrimage of Grace



#### Available from:

http://www.tudorplace.com.ar/Documents/PilgrimageofGrace.htm.

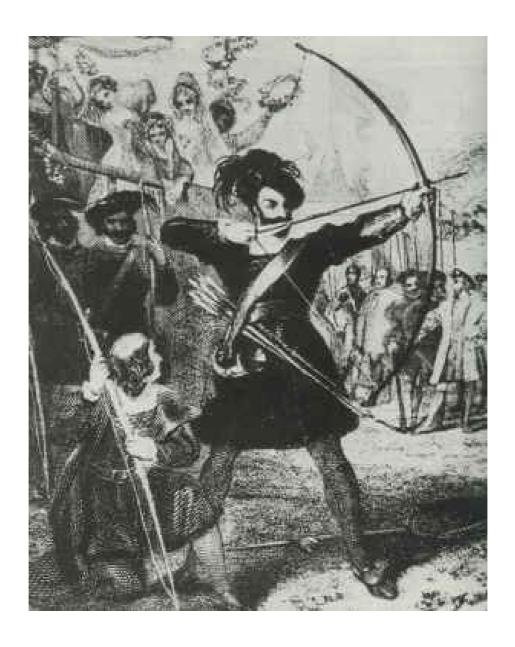
Henry VIII playing a harp, with his fool Will Somers



### Available from:

http://tudorhistory.org/henry8/gallery2.html.

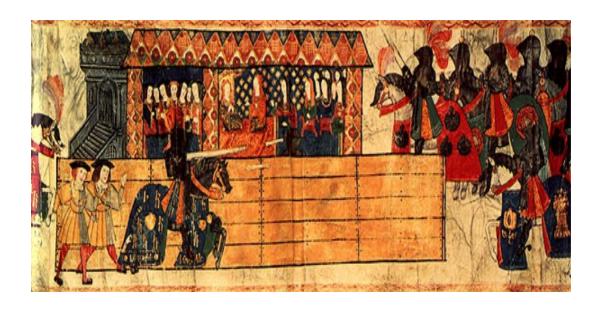
## Henry VIII demonstrating his skill with the longbow



### Available from:

http://www.centenaryarchers.gil.com.au/history.htm.

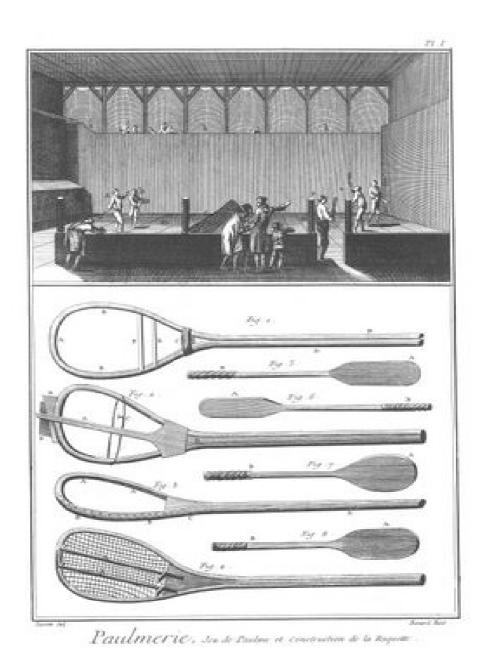
Henry VIII jousting while Catherine of Aragon looks on



Available from:

http://tudorhistory.org/henry8/gallery.html.

### Real tennis and the construction of racquets



#### Available from:

http://www.allposters.com/-sp/Real-Tennis-and-the-Construction-of-Racquets-from-the-Encyclopedia-by-Denis-Diderot-Posters\_i6240038\_.htm.

## Real tennis court at Hampton Court Palace



### Available from:

http://www.itftennis.com/technical/equipment/courts/history.asp.

## Aerial view of Hampton Court Palace now



### Available from:

http://www.stormfront.org/forum/t712769-4/.